The Assistant Commissioner for Patents

IN THE CLAIMS

Please rewrite claim 1 as follows:

1. (Amended) A method of inhibiting alkaline darkening of a mechanical pulp in the presence of a calcium carbonate filler comprising:

providing an aqueous suspension of a mechanical pulp for producing paper, and

incorporating in said suspension a calcium carbonate filler for producing paper with the pulp, and a sulphite to inhibit alkaline darkening of said pulp in said suspension arising from the calcium carbonate filler in the suspension.

Please insert in the application claims 20 to 25 hereinafter.

20. (New) A method of inhibiting darkening of a mechanical pulp in the presence of calcium carbonate comprising:

providing an aqueous suspension of a mechanical pulp for producing paper,

incorporating in said suspension a calcium carbonate filler for producing paper with the pulp and a sulphite,

maintaining a pH of 7 to 9 in the resulting suspension containing said pulp, filler and sulphite, and

chemically reacting said sulphite with said pulp to inhibit darkening of said pulp by said calcium carbonate.

The Assistant Commissioner for Patents

21. (New) A method according to claim 20, wherein said sulphite is selected from alkali metal sulphites, alkali metal bisulphites and alkali metal metabisulphites.

22. (New) A method according to claim 20, wherein said sulphite is selected from sodium sulphite, sodium bisulphite and sodium metabisulphite.

23. (New) A method of producing paper from a mechanical pulp and calcium carbonate filler comprising:

providing an aqueous suspension of a mechanical pulp for producing paper,

incorporating in said suspension a calcium carbonate filler for producing paper with the pulp, and a sulphite,

maintaining a pH of 6.5 to 9 in the resulting suspension containing said pulp filler and sulphite,

chemically reacting said sulphite with said pulp to inhibit darkening of said pulp by said calcium carbonate filler, and

forming said suspension into paper.

24 (New) A method according to claim 23, wherein said sulphite is selected from alkali metal sulphites, alkali metal bisulphites and alkali metal metabisulphite.

25. (New) A method according to claim 23, wherein said sulphite is selected from sodium sulphite, sodium bisulphite and sodium metabisulphite.